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Second Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)

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General debate (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Deiye** (Nauru), speaking on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States, said that the impact of climate change, including rising sea levels, posed a growing security challenge to which the United Nations must adapt and respond promptly, including through the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General on climate and security. The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and natural disasters continued to worsen and the survival of Pacific small island developing States was under threat. In recent years, a staggering number of lives had been lost and communities continued to suffer the consequences of those disasters. In the Pacific region, modern approaches to enhancing food security and resilience to natural disasters should be complemented by local, traditional knowledge and practices. The integrated conservation of cultural and natural heritage could contribute to sustainable development and social cohesion.

2. The unique vulnerability of small island developing States must be addressed in the context of equitable and inclusive growth. In the run-up to the high-level review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), there was a need to re-examine the eligibility criteria for access to financing for development and technical assistance. Classification according to income often excluded small island developing States from preferential treatment. Reports by the Secretary-General on reviewing United Nations system support for small island developing States could serve as a guide for reform.

3. Financing for development was another urgent priority. Without actionable streams of financing, the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would remain empty promises. International cooperation and genuine and durable partnerships were essential for sustainable development, particularly for small island developing States, where capacity to mobilize additional domestic resources was limited. They especially needed capacity-building support in the areas of data collection, statistical analysis and research.

4. Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu were among the least developed countries that especially required assistance from development partners to enhance their prospects for graduation, help them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil the objectives of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action).

5. The Pacific small island developing States stood by their commitment to sustaining the health, productivity and resilience of the Pacific Ocean. The undertakings made at the United Nations conference on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 provided a critical benchmark for sustainable development. The health of the oceans was tightly linked to the other goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

6. **Mr. Al Shuaibi** (Oman) said that the 2030 Agenda, the aim of which was to underpin global security and stability, was a beacon of hope for peoples throughout the world. Innovative approaches and enhanced international cooperation, including capacity-building for developing countries and the transfer of advanced technology, were required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. For its part, Oman would present its national voluntary review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019. The review would highlight how his country was adapting its national development plans to the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

7. His Government attached the utmost importance to preserving the environment. It was working to ensure that national legislation was in line with international laws and norms on the matter and to optimize methods for mining raw materials. International trade was a key to development. The World Trade Organization (WTO) played an important role in leading the multilateral trade system and creating an international economic environment conducive to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. **Mr. Premchandran** (India) said that his country was one of more than 110 Member States to have submitted a national voluntary review in the previous three years and that it was on course to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It supported the Secretary-General's reform proposals for the United Nations development system. In that context, traditional donors should increase their voluntary contributions to accelerate the process of breathing new life into the resident coordinator system.

9. Policy priority areas in India included poverty eradication, health care, education, gender matters, skills and employment and the development of infrastructure. His Government had launched the Clean India Mission, the world's largest sanitation and hygiene programme, to eradicate open defecation by 2019. The proportion of the population defecating in the open in India was now 20 per cent, a drop from 60 per cent four years previously. The Secretary-General had

recently acknowledged the efforts made by the Government of India to provide its people with sanitary facilities.

10. His Government planned to produce 175 GW of renewable energy, 100 GW of it using solar power, by 2022. Led by India and France, the International Solar Alliance had 70 member States and would make a tangible contribution to global climate action efforts. Th Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, had recently received a United Nations Champions of the Earth award for his leadership role in environment initiatives, including the pledge to eliminate all single-use plastics in India by 2022. Cochin International Airport in the State of Kerala, which was fully solar-powered, had also been recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme with a Champions of the Earth award. As a result of its reliance on solar power, carbon dioxide emissions would be reduced by more than 900,000 tons in the coming 25 years, the equivalent of planting 9 million trees, and financial savings of $6 million per year would be made.

11. India was involved in the preparatory process for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which would further underline the link between international migration and sustainable development. His Government looked forward to the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, which would be held in 2019. In that context, it had established the India-UN Development Partnership Fund in 2017 and had committed $150 million to finance development projects in least developed countries and small island developing States in the coming decade. India had contributed to the Trust Fund for International Cooperation in Tax Matters for the second year running. It had also contributed to trust funds for the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and to the organization of the mid-term review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024.

12. **Mr. Muenda** (South Africa) said that the work of the Second Committee should be focused on implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The achievement of the goals contained therein could contribute greatly to reducing global economic inequality. Multilateralism was fundamental for tackling climate change, which most affected the poorest and most vulnerable, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. Developed countries should cooperate with their developing counterparts and thereby help to combat unemployment and poverty. South-South and triangular cooperation and private-sector investment could not be a substitute for North-South cooperation. Efforts must be made to conclude the Doha Development Round and agree on legally binding outcomes that would allow developing countries to engage effectively in equitable global trade.

14. The establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area could lead to unprecedented economic development and encourage industrialization on the continent. A projected population of 1.7 billion people and nearly $7 trillion in cumulative consumer and business spending by 2030 made the goal of a creating a single market viable. Alongside trade, however, there was also a need to combat the flow of illicit finance, build institutions, promote technology transfer and work with national statistics offices to improve data quality. The latter was especially important for measuring progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the issue of intellectual property rights should not become a barrier precluding developing countries from benefiting from the fourth industrial revolution. Failure in that regard would serve only to perpetuate inequality and exclusion, especially among women, persons with disabilities and rural communities.

15. **Mr. Mahmadaminov** (Tajikistan) said that the pace of implementation of the 2030 Agenda fell well short of expectations. The developed countries should support the process, including through official development assistance (ODA), technology transfer, financing for development and capacity-building. In particular, countries in Africa, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States needed assistance.

16. Climate change was having a significant and growing impact on Central Asia. In Tajikistan alone, natural disasters causing floods, avalanches and landslides had claimed the lives of 200 people and resulted in severe economic damage estimated at $600 million in the previous five to six years. In response, his Government had adopted a national action plan to mitigate the effects of climate change and was working on a related strategy. To date, it had submitted three national reports in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Developing countries needed financial assistance and technology transfer to address the effects of climate change.

17. Sustainable Development Goal 6 and other water-related Goals were a priority for Tajikistan. The Dushanbe process, launched by his Government, would serve as a forum for promoting action, dialogue and policies in the context of General Assembly resolution 71/222 on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018–2028. His Government's global water-related initiatives had contributed to raising awareness of those issues. He called on all Member States to support the draft resolution that his delegation would submit on a mid-term comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action.

18. **Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) said that, in an era of great change brought about by scientific and technological progress and the digitization of many aspects of life, the system of multilateral cooperation, painstakingly built over decades, was coming undone. Breaking the rules had become the norm. The openness of markets and honest competition were being plagued by a variety of exemptions, restrictions and sanctions. Such restrictions, frequently extraterritorial in nature, distorted the entire panorama of international trade and collaboration and were increasingly aimed at choking off access to financial resources and new technologies. Disturbingly, sanctions were more and more often being used as a cover for protectionism. Those developments were dampening prospects for global growth and raised doubts regarding the chances of effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda.

19. The Russian Federation favoured free trade, economic integration and constructive dialogue between partners. It was unfair to ascribe all the problems affecting international trade to WTO. In trade, as in politics, one needed to negotiate, not dictate terms. The Committee should focus on how to overcome inequality of opportunities, address demographic and ecological challenges, preserve national cultures and identities, increase people's well-being and make the advantages of new technology widely accessible. Success should be measured in terms of practical results, effectiveness and intergovernmental consensus. The issues of debt, strengthening tax regulations, creating a transparent and non-discriminatory international system of trade and improving the mechanisms for technology transfer must be addressed. The needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, should not be overlooked.

20. The Russian Federation was systematically stepping up its contribution to efforts to achieve sustainable development with large-scale socioeconomic and environmental programmes in various regions around the world. It was also increasing its delivery of food aid and broadening its involvement in joint projects with United Nations programmes and funds. In 2017, his Government's contribution to international development had totalled $1.16 billion. Reform of the United Nations development system should be aimed at making it more effective in assisting Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda. It was to be hoped that the anticipated cost reductions would permit the continued funding of a reformed resident coordinator system.

21. **Ms. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) said that implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement required a strong commitment, political will and cooperation between all Member States. The Committee must work on the basis of constructive debate, mutual respect and the sovereign equality of its members. Compliance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations should prevail and the imposition of non-consensual proposals that represented only the interests of developed countries must end.

22. Three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, inequality and social polarization worldwide were worsening, including in the developed nations. The eradication of poverty in all its forms was essential for sustainable development. Annual global military expenditure of $1.7 trillion suggested that the resources to tackle those issues were available; the most powerful States, however, lacked the political will to fulfil their commitments. The developed countries were still far from meeting the target of devoting 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) as ODA to developing countries, and 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent to least developed countries. The problem of foreign debt, which had already been repaid several times over, must also be solved. A new international financial architecture was required and the technological and knowledge monopoly must be eliminated. South-South cooperation should not be viewed as a substitute for North-South cooperation and the industrialized countries must exercise the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The achievement of the right to development could no longer be postponed. The recent reform of the United Nations development system must be implemented with due respect for national policies and priorities.

23. Climate change posed a threat to human survival. Although inadequate, the Paris Agreement was a starting point that should be maintained and developed. No country should unilaterally renounce its international responsibility in that regard or forget its ecological debt to humanity and future generations.

24. The vast majority of countries in the international community had repeatedly rejected the imposition of unilateral, coercive measures that impeded the full achievement of economic and social development, especially in developing countries. Cuba vigorously rejected that practice and once again urged States to refrain from unilaterally promulgating and implementing economic, financial or trade measures that were inconsistent with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. For nearly 60 years, the Cuban people had withstood the illegal, immoral and unjust economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the Government of the United States of America, which continued to be rigorously applied. Nevertheless, the people of Cuba remained committed to updating the country's economic and social model and implementing its 2030 development plan with a view to building an independent, sovereign, prosperous, democratic and sustainable socialist nation.

25. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that, while States had the primary responsibility for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Governments alone could not do the necessary work; the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors must be involved. Effective democratic governance, zero tolerance for corruption and strong public education systems were conducive to lasting development. Science, research, technology and innovation were also critical and would need to be used wisely to feed the world's growing population, which was projected to be well above 8 billion by 2030. Small- and medium-sized businesses provided most jobs in developing countries. Governments should therefore create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and provide training for people with initiative and solid ideas. Engaging in business provided a pathway for economic mobility, had a major impact on families and communities and was key to the economic empowerment of women. Moreover, increasing the resources available to women and ensuring their control over their own assets went hand in hand with efforts to strengthen women's rights, which her Government supported as an end in itself.

26. The Committee should strive for efficiency and impact, limiting the proliferation of resolutions, focusing on issues with wide application and ensuring that it was not transformed into another United Nations venue for politicized mud-slinging.

27. **Mr. Alkadi** (Saudi Arabia) said that his country had taken a major step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals with its ambitious Vision 2030 programme. Several ministries and other institutions had been restructured so that they might contribute fully to the realization of the programme, which rested on three pillars: a vibrant society, a flourishing economy and an ambitious nation, reflected in the country's strong Arab and Islamic identity, its vocation as an investment powerhouse and its key geostrategic position. As part of the country's bid to become a major global economic player, his Government planned to simplify the business environment in order to encourage strategic investment partnerships with the private sector, create employment opportunities for citizens and drive prosperity for all. The goal of Vision 2030 was to place Saudi Arabia in the global vanguard by providing opportunities for all through education, employment initiatives, health and housing services and entertainment. Saudi Arabia would continue to work with its international partners to implement the 2030 Agenda and contribute whatever was required of it to that end, within the limits of its laws and customs.

28. **Ms. Bah-Chang** (Sierra Leone) said that her Government was working on a national development plan that was aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Under the plan, promoting education, justice, peace and security, and combating corruption and illicit financial flows had been identified as the key areas to be tackled. Under its education for development agenda, her Government was prioritizing free, high-quality primary and secondary education, with a focus on empowering women and girls.

29. Concerns regarding government accounting systems had been addressed. The Treasury single account provided a unified structure for the Government's bank accounts and contributed to the efficient and transparent management and use of public funds, given that all government cash resources were transferred to one consolidated revenue fund. Sierra Leone was committed to eliminating poverty and hunger by 2030. To that end, significant resource mobilization and improved access to public health, education and other social services were needed. Her Government recognized the progress achieved in making the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries operational and the significant advances made by some least developed countries towards graduation. Nonetheless, millions of people continued to live in extreme poverty and children were still dying of preventable diseases. New ways must be found to boost the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

30. The threat posed by climate change, including to Sierra Leone, underlined the urgent need for renewed efforts to mobilize resources and provide technical assistance for building capacity and resilience, in line with the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action

Agenda. It was to be hoped that the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review would lead to increased support for least developed countries, particularly those with new Governments facing high expectations to deliver services, and to improved efficiency and accountability. The process should continue to be driven by Member States, while implementation plans should be guided by national strategies to ensure maximum coordination between United Nations entities at the regional and national levels.

31. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that the multilateral system, which had benefited all members of the international community, was under pressure. The 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement were all the result of multilateral cooperation. Climate change, conflict and instability were the worst enemies of sustainable development. More than 820 million people suffered from hunger and their number was rising. To reverse that trend, sustainable development must be pursued at all levels. Addressing climate change, which posed a threat to peace and security and had a particularly severe impact on small island developing States, was the key to sustainable transformation. It was equally vital to ensure the sound management and sustainable use of oceans. Destruction of marine ecosystems must stop and ocean productivity should increase. The High-level Panel on Building a Sustainable Ocean Economy would facilitate the achievement of those aims. All policy areas covered by the Sustainable Development Goals should also be informed by a gender perspective.

32. The reform of the United Nations development system, which Member States had a responsibility to fund adequately, must be carried out without delay. Norway would pay its share. Financing was critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provided comprehensive guidance. ODA would remain important, especially for least developed countries, and there was room for growth. For the past 10 years, Norway had allocated around 1 per cent of GDP to ODA and it would continue to honour its commitments in the future. Nevertheless, ODA alone could not transform societies. More must be done to mobilize domestic resources, promote fair taxation and eradicate corruption. Addressing illicit financial flows through national action and international cooperation was crucial to prevent the loss of the resources needed to achieve sustainable development.

33. **Mr.** Omer Dahab Fadl **Mohamed** (Sudan) said that the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty was indispensable for, and posed the greatest challenge to, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sudanese Higher Committee for Sustainable Development, headed by the Vice-President, had been established to monitor progress in achieving those Goals under the national programme launched for that purpose. Relevant ministries were represented on the Higher Committee. The Sudan had presented a national voluntary review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2018 and would submit another in 2019. Its position as a country emerging from conflict and a low-income least developed country, its external debt burden and the presence of 2 million refugees in its territory had hampered its development and growth efforts and hence its poverty eradication programmes. The international community must look at ways to help the Sudan and other countries facing similar difficulties not to fall even further behind.

34. The Sudan appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to reform the United Nations development system. Financing was decisive for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and developed countries should fulfil their commitments to developing countries with regard to ODA, financing, capacity-building, technology transfer and debt forgiveness. The international community should also focus more on supporting countries emerging from conflict to transition from assistance to the reconstruction and development phase, which would be conducive to stability.

35. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh) said that the vision of the 2030 Agenda was threatened by protracted economic stagnation, fiscal austerity, increased opposition to multilateralism and growing protectionism in wealthy countries, and a sustained decline in global partnerships for development with a concomitant failure to deliver on financial commitments. Climate change events and the advent of the fourth industrial revolution would also compound the uncertainty of the future. Serious and focused discussion on those issues would be required to collectively change the situation.

36. Bangladesh had implemented bold development plans, people-centred policies involving the whole of society, and fiscal reforms to place the country on a solid social and economic foundation. Its poverty rate and extreme poverty rate had both dropped in 2018, and 100 special economic zones being set up would help to create millions of job opportunities.

37. Solar power generation capacity had increased in remote areas and 90 per cent of the population enjoyed access to electricity. The Rooppur nuclear power plant was a step forward in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Food security, access to medical facilities and access to sanitation and safe drinking water had been improved, and a social safety net had been established.

38. Through the Digital Bangladesh programme, which was popular with Bangladeshi youth, information and communications technology had been used to ensure good governance, accelerate development and create jobs. Transportation infrastructure development continued and various mega-development projects funded from the national budget were under way. Bangladesh had also launched its first satellite.

39. Bangladesh had earned global accolades for closing gender gaps and empowering women. Legal and development policies had been put in place to establish the rights of women and integrate them with national development efforts, creating job opportunities for women.

40. Bangladesh was highly vulnerable to climate change. It was committed to the Paris Agreement and had communicated its nationally determined contributions in 2016, articulating actions for the adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. It was also implementing a variety of projects, largely self-funded, to guard against the negative impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

41. In a landmark development achievement, Bangladesh had qualified for graduation from the least developed country category in 2018. The country would address the challenges arising from the withdrawal of benefits associated with that category by focusing on economic diversification and new markets. Transforming its huge population into a skilled workforce was a priority. A technology-driven society and growth through innovation would be required to attain its vision of achieving middle-income country status by 2021 and developed country status by 2041.

42. Financing would be the greatest challenge in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, which were integrated into its seventh five-year plan. It faced an average annual resource gap of $66.32 billion until 2030. The data gap, a barrier to monitoring the implementation of the Goals, was being addressed through SDG Tracker, a data repository.

43. Water was crucial for development and Member States should take urgent action to appraise, manage and invest in water. The needs and priorities of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, should be emphasized in the implementation of the reform of the United Nations development system. Member States must identify the obstacles to the realization of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which included issues related to ODA, trade, foreign direct investment, domestic resource mobilization, technology transfer and capacity-building. The multilateral, rules-based trading system must be protected and South-South cooperation, as a complement to North-South cooperation, must be enhanced. A major challenge in the context of the fourth industrial revolution would be to create decent jobs, tackle inequality and ensure that the benefits of technological change were available to all.

44. **Mr. Al-Laithi** (Iraq) said that financial support, technology transfer, the promotion of investment and the stimulation of the private sector were the key means by which developed countries and international organizations could help developing countries, especially in special cases such as that of Iraq after its long war against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The Government had launched policies to rein in inflation and government spending, modernize State banks and activate the private banking sector, notwithstanding the collapse of oil prices and the effects of the war, which had drained the country's resources, ruined its infrastructure, driven off investment and impaired its human resources through the internal displacement of 6 million people.

45. Priorities under his Government's comprehensive development plan for the period 2018–2022, which had been launched in the wake of the defeat of ISIL and the recovery of global oil prices, included returning the displaced to their home towns, rebuilding infrastructure, activating the private sector and attracting foreign investment. His Government had been able, with the support of the international community, to help around 60 per cent of the displaced to return home. Donors should assist Iraq in implementing its plan, which would bring stability and prosperity to the country and have a positive knock-on effect on the troubled Middle East region. Partners that had promised to provide assistance must do so urgently. Iraq had paid a heavy price to win its war against international terrorism and looked to the international community for support in achieving comprehensive and sustainable development.

46. A period of harsh drought and falling water levels had led to widespread desertification and a tangible rise in average temperatures in Iraq, hitting the farming sector and posing a serious threat to food security. All countries sharing water resources should uphold the principle of their equitable distribution. His Government was ready to work with its neighbours to reach a just agreement to that end.

47. **Mr. Srivihok** (Thailand) said that, while progress had been made in implementing the 2030 Agenda, it was

not fast enough or consistent across regions and countries. Multilateralism was being questioned, and in that context, the work of the Committee was more important than ever. It needed clear priorities and increased efficiency in order to maintain its practical relevance and help rebuild confidence in the United Nations.

48. Financing for development was a key issue and, in that regard, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda. ODA, domestic resource mobilization and good governance remained crucial to financing the Goals. Thailand supported innovative and affordable financing solutions, such as Sustainable Development Goal bonds and green bonds. In addition to public-private partnerships, new potential stakeholders, including philanthropists, could play a positive role in supporting financing for development.

49. Widespread protectionism and growing trade tensions, which hurt trade-dependent developing countries in particular, were a matter of concern. Thailand firmly believed in free and fair trade and reaffirmed its commitment to a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as embodied in the World Trade Organization.

50. More political will was needed to tackle climate change and natural disasters, which continued to pose challenges to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, affecting rich and poor alike. Disaster risk reduction, which was a shared responsibility of all stakeholders, must be mainstreamed into national development policies, with effective action taken at both the local and national levels. The private sector could provide financial resources and technology, while the United Nations should deepen and broaden the scale, scope and diversity of the partnerships needed to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) and the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. The achievement of the 2030 Agenda required partnerships at all levels and active participation from all parts of society. Thailand had applied a holistic approach of public-private-people partnerships in its development. As the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, Thailand had worked to deepen cooperation with United Nations agencies in the area. As Chair of ASEAN in 2019, it planned to establish an ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue to further strengthen partnerships.

52. Thailand had always supported South-South and triangular cooperation, in addition to North-South cooperation, with the goal of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and helping to complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. South-South and triangular cooperation should follow a demand-driven approach and help to build self-reliance. Thailand had contributed $520,000 to the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South cooperation in 2016 and an additional $50,000 to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation in 2018.

53. Thailand welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative for the repositioning of the United Nations development system and had contributed $200,000 to the Special Purpose Trust Fund to reinvigorate the resident coordinator system. In that context, it looked forward to the Secretary-General's detailed proposal, on a region-by-region basis, for revamping the regional economic commissions.

54. **Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) said that poverty eradication must be approached from a multidimensional perspective. Macroeconomic indicators could not reflect the capabilities of individual countries to overcome poverty, ensure access to decent work, eliminate inequality, effectively empower women and overcome socioeconomic and environmental vulnerabilities.

55. Lapses in food safety were the cause of illness in 600 million people worldwide each year. Technical and scientific food safety guidelines must be created to ensure access to safe food for all. Costa Rica would therefore introduce a draft resolution proposing the establishment of a World Food Safety Day to be celebrated on 7 June each year.

56. Costa Rica welcomed the decision to proclaim 2019–2028 the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, as a platform to emphasize the importance of family farmers to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should also work to advance the programme of work for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

57. Costa Rica attached great importance to the promotion of good governance around the world, It was therefore important to detect and prevent illicit financial flows and promote initiatives favouring open government, accountability and compliance with international standards such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption. States must promote investment, innovation and a favourable economic environment for business, in order to create optimal conditions for the mobilization of development resources. Member States should also strengthen

cooperation platforms to enable knowledge-sharing on fiscal matters.

58. Costa Rica sought to promote an ambitious environmental vision, particularly with regard to implementing the Paris Agreement and combating climate change. As such, it wished to share its experience in forest conservation and renewable energy generation as part of the deep decarbonization of the economy. Combating pollution should be a shared goal. In that context, the Committee should welcome and build on the outcomes of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The United Nations should also be at the forefront of deliberations regarding the challenges and opportunities presented by new technologies in relation to sustainable development.

59. Development financing should take account of the particularities of each country to ensure that assistance was channelled to those most in need.

60. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that the protection of children's rights and the empowerment of young people through education and access to decent work were key to achieving sustainable development. Argentina, in conjunction with the International Labour Organization, had hosted the fourth Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, which had resulted in the Buenos Aires Declaration on Child Labour, Forced Labour and Youth Employment. Argentina would continue to work actively in the United Nations for the eradication of child labour and called on all countries to fully support that work.

61. Despite the expansion of South-South cooperation since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1978, the countries of the global South continued to face significant economic, social and environmental challenges. South-South and triangular cooperation must therefore be strengthened at all levels. The Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to be held in Buenos Aires in March 2019, would be an opportunity to review lessons learned, identify new areas of greatest impact and establish appropriate follow-up mechanisms within the United Nations system. It would be important to consider how to reflect the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and the interrelated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals within the policies and practices of South-South cooperation. Knowledge gaps, and uneven access to solutions and resources, continued to significantly hinder full realization of the potential of South-South cooperation. Those gaps must be addressed and, in that regard, the outcomes of the Conference should include a call for enhanced efforts to promote capacity-building and technology transfer. The Conference should also contribute to strengthening regional and interregional platforms, which could help to identify broad, inclusive development strategies. South-South cooperation was a complement to, not a substitute for North-South cooperation. It had the potential to revitalize multilateralism and galvanize the global partnership for sustainable development. A high-level mechanism should be created to regularly review trends in South-South and triangular cooperation, their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the progress made by the international community and the United Nations system.

62. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) said that the world was at a critical juncture for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Endemic poverty and inequality had become even more marked in developed and developing countries alike, especially for peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation. Coercive economic measures were a significant obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and must be lifted.

63. The right to development was a right for all. Nicaragua urged the developed countries to finally meet their ODA commitments and to provide additional, predictable and sufficient financial resources. The focus of the Committee's work over the next decade must be to foster unity among its members and work together to overcome challenges. Its most urgent commitment was poverty eradication.

64. Financing for development was also crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that context, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be respected. Developing countries could not be expected to have the same responsibilities as developed countries. A genuine global alliance meant providing them with access to financial and technological resources.

65. His Government had worked steadily to implement the 2030 Agenda. Nicaragua was one of the most successful countries in the region in terms of sustained economic growth and had achieved a significant reduction in both extreme poverty and overall poverty between 2009 and 2016.

66. Urgent action was needed to combat climate change. Developed countries should take the lead in that regard and change their unsustainable modes of production and consumption. They should also meet their financial commitments, including through technology transfer. Nicaragua would continue to work within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change towards an outcome that reflected the

gravity of the climate crisis and protected the ecosystems that supported life on Earth. In the light of recent catastrophic hurricanes and earthquakes, his delegation called for ongoing disaster risk reduction efforts, with the support of donors and the international community.

67. Nicaragua reiterated its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and the exercise of their inalienable rights. As peoples living under occupation were also entitled to development, his delegation supported the inclusion in the Committee's agenda of the annual resolution on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

68. **Mr. Sukhee** (Mongolia) said that, three years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the international community had made significant progress in operationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, while joint efforts to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda needed to be further strengthened through close partnerships and an improved environment for development. A stable global economy was a key factor for the achievement of the Goals.

69. Mongolia had been working to ensure coherence between the Sustainable Development Goals and national development strategies and policies. It aspired, by 2030, to consolidate democratic governance, preserve ecological balance, eradicate all forms of poverty and achieve upper middle-income country status. It had recently experienced robust economic growth with accelerated foreign trade turnover, increased investment in the mining sector and budget surpluses. The International Monetary Fund Extended Fund Facility had been implemented, causing economic growth to surge between 2016 and the first half of 2018, with further increases expected in 2019. Mongolia planned to present its first voluntary national review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019.

70. Climate change and disaster risk remained daunting challenges for humanity. The implementation of the Paris Agreement had failed to meet expectations and shared responsibilities had been insufficiently shouldered. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's call for a climate summit to be convened in 2019. Asia was one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, and Mongolia was therefore keen to contribute to regional cooperation to enhance disaster resilience, reduce risk and increase the effectiveness of disaster prevention activities. During the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security and the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2018, its proposal to establish a North-East Asia disaster risk reduction platform in Mongolia had received support from countries in the region.

71. Mongolia had recently called for the launch of the North-East Asian Super Grid project, which would provide energy security, create jobs and reduce carbon dioxide emissions for countries in that region. Furthermore, it was working to develop strategic partnerships with China and the Russian Federation.

72. Mongolia attached great importance to South-South cooperation and was contributing to it by promoting the interests of landlocked developing countries. In that regard, the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, was now fully operational. It would help to generate knowledge and develop analytical tools to overcome common challenges.

73. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that his country had been beset by a deeply rooted and multidimensional crisis since 2012, caused by underdevelopment, extreme poverty, vulnerability to climate change, food insecurity and malnutrition. Those challenges must be addressed before a truly lasting peace could be established in Mali. His Government had therefore made every effort to provide the people with the dividends of peace, especially drinking water, electricity and other basic needs, education, health care and rural roads. Development projects with immediate impact, including income-generating activities aimed especially at youth, refugees and internally displaced persons who had returned to their place of origin, had been implemented in the most vulnerable regions of the country.

74. In July 2018, Mali had presented its voluntary national review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, highlighting the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development, which covered the period 2016–2018. The review had also described the challenges and outlook regarding a number of priority issues: strengthening peace and security, consolidating macroeconomic stability, promoting accelerated, sustainable and pro-poor growth that would generate employment, ensuring equitable access to basic social services, and improving institutional development and good governance. Significant progress had been made in paving roads to improve access to remote regions and across borders. The Government had allocated 15 per cent of the national budget to the agricultural sector, significantly

exceeding the commitment of 10 per cent made in the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. At the same time, the Government had implemented a social safety net programme to transfer funds to poor households suffering from food insecurity, which had benefited over 60,000 households by the end of September 2016 and aimed to provide assistance to over 91,000 households by the end of 2019. His Government was convinced that gender equality was essential to eradicate poverty and improve living conditions. In November 2015, a law had been adopted to promote gender equality in elected and appointed positions.

75. Mali fully supported the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations development system, and especially the resident coordinator system. It joined other delegations in calling for partners to make appropriate voluntary contributions so that a reinvigorated resident coordinator system could be fully operational as early as January 2019.

76. His Government would continue to combat poverty and work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the related development projects would require an immense injection of resources unavailable in a country like Mali. Therefore, while he acknowledged the constant support of the international community, he urgently called on all development partners to honour the commitments they had made at the Together for a New Mali conference held in Brussels in 2013 and the Building an Emerging Mali conference held in Paris in 2015.

77. **Mr. Kemayah, Sr.** (Liberia) said that the theme for the general debate at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, "Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies", was an embodiment of the 2030 Agenda. Member States must consolidate their efforts to stamp out poverty, disease and hunger and provide a sustainable livelihood for all to protect vulnerable populations and the environment for succeeding generations. Progress to date had not been rapid enough to meet the targets of the 2030 Agenda. Successful reform of the United Nations development system was also required to make the United Nations relevant to the people of the world and enhance the system's capacity to support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

78. His Government had designed a national development plan known as the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, through which it aimed to empower the people by reducing developmental inequalities; stimulate economic stability and job creation through effective resource mobilization and economic inclusion; promote a peaceful and cohesive society for sustainable development; and enhance governance and transparency by creating an inclusive and accountable public sector.

79. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the infrastructure gap and debt vulnerability of developing countries, especially least developed countries, must be addressed. An enabling development environment, means of implementation and domestic resource mobilization would be required. To achieve the latter, Liberia was expanding its internal revenue generation and collection, and strengthening national oversight institutions in keeping with its commitment to transparency and accountability in public financial management. However, despite its political will, it could not raise all the necessary resources alone and would need to rely on the assistance of its regional and international partners to achieve full implementation of the Goals.

80. **Ms. Pham** (Viet Nam) said that the Committee needed to take advantage of the momentum of the first three years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While each country was responsible for accelerating the implementation of the Goals, international cooperation was crucial to ensure an enabling environment for achieving sustainable development. Several priorities had emerged that should be addressed with heightened urgency at the international level. All development stakeholders needed to step up their efforts to provide tailored assistance to the countries that were most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, including her own. To enhance preparedness, long-term and integrated solutions were needed.

81. Measures to level the playing field in international trade by promoting a rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system were also of vital importance in order to enable countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

82. Unfortunately, the benefits of scientific and technological innovation remained a distant promise for the majority of the poor. The digital divide between developed and developing countries remained a concern, with high-speed broadband penetration in developing countries reaching only 6 per cent of the population, compared with more than 24 per cent in developed countries in 2016. Her Government therefore called on development partners to take the lead in providing technical assistance, capacity-building and technology and knowledge transfer. It also called for the operationalization of the online platform of the

Technology Facilitation Mechanism to disseminate information on existing related initiatives, mechanisms and programmes.

83. Lower middle-income countries like Viet Nam still had inherent vulnerabilities. However, many donors had been phasing out or downscaling their bilateral programmes in those countries, which often still needed ODA and other concessional finance. Her delegation called on donor countries to fulfil their commitments and provide support to help middle-income countries strengthen their resilience. The United Nations system should develop comprehensive methods to track the progress of sustainable development using measures that went beyond per capita income.

84. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that the 2030 Agenda was the universal road map for global development challenges. It was important to place the Committee's deliberations in the context of ongoing efforts to reform the United Nations development system, so as to create more synergies between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The Samoa Pathway must also be at the centre of the Committee's discussions and efforts to meet the commitments contained therein must be accelerated.

85. National ownership and impetus was vital for economic development. Countries must be able to set their own development vision and recognize their own abilities to take the necessary steps towards a prosperous future. At the same time, the international system must support the development efforts of small island developing States in the form of capacity-building, technology transfer and access to finance in order for them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

86. The Maldives had pursued economic development policies based on the belief that the best strategy for coping with inherent vulnerabilities was to build national resilience. The close alliances it maintained with its own private sector and external partners, as well as increasingly with non-traditional development partners, had resulted in significant progress across economic, social and developmental sectors, as clearly illustrated by its voluntary national review in 2017.

87. However, the Maldives still faced challenges in attracting investment in certain crucial areas. International public finance could be mobilized for mutual benefit and would be critical to its achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. His Government sought to establish an enabling environment that did not place middle-income countries at a disadvantage.

88. The United Nations development system must evolve to cater to the needs of Member States in their implementation of global development frameworks. Countries in special situations, such as small island developing States, required particular support. His delegation therefore urged Member States to allocate additional resources to the United Nations so that it could better assist such countries to achieve the relevant outcomes.

89. **Mr. Locsin, Jr.** (Philippines) said that his country's development plans incorporated all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The three pillars of sustainable development were interlinked, and it was therefore urgent to reduce extreme poverty, which went against the moral imperative to ensure the universal attainment of the Goals. No-one should advance at the expense of another, and generational sacrifice on behalf of another generation was unfair unless willingly shouldered. The world had outgrown visions and had matured into practical compassion.

90. Reform of the United Nations development system was vital. Multilateralism was not a self-evident good if it could not function effectively because of inefficiency, redundancy and waste. The United Nations must be restored to its historical role as an organization of States first and foremost, existing for State-sponsored multilateral purposes that were always strictly in accordance with the goals of the Charter. It was far more than a podium for the expression of grand grievances for anyone pushing their way in. States were primarily responsible for the success of the world, and they alone had the wherewithal to achieve that success.

91. A more realistic statistical measure of middle-income countries was needed. The luxury of throwing money at problems, hoping that some would hit the spot, could no longer be afforded. Migration was not just a desperate measure to escape badly-governed States, it was also an enabler of development. Thus, aggregate remittance flows were potential sources of substantial private capital if properly handled. In addition, the Philippines championed family farming, which, although at risk of dying out, still accounted for 80 per cent of the world's food. Disaster risk reduction and climate action must inform national development plans and be integrated into United Nations programmes. Weather was not predictable and its destructive power could not be estimated beforehand. Therefore, capacity-building for climate action must be based on national capacities and needs, as well as on the imperative to extend international help.

92. Lastly, it was the responsibility of all members of the international community to rescue and relieve any

part of humanity that was at risk of, or already undergoing, violent mass extinction. Intervention must be swift but also careful, so as not to worsen the situation, either inadvertently or by design.

93. **Ms. Shurbaji** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that if the United Nations was serious about helping countries to achieve sustainable development, then it must call for an immediate halt to the unilateral coercive measures which were dragging down the Syrian economy, worsening human development indicators, fuelling poverty and food insecurity and damaging vital sectors such as health care, education and power generation. In that regard, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights had expressed concern that such measures were contributing to the ongoing suffering of the Syrian people. Moreover, Israel continued to exploit and deplete natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan. General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) on permanent sovereignty over natural resources was especially relevant in that regard.

94. The Syrian Arab Republic was now experiencing an exceptional period of increased security and stability thanks to advances in the fight against terrorism. Her Government wished to rebuild areas destroyed by the terrorists and facilitate the return of refugees. That could not be achieved as long as the political agendas of certain Governments stood in the way. The Syrian people were looking to the United Nations, its agencies and specialized bodies to switch their focus from the provision of humanitarian assistance to development aid for reconstruction, without double standards, political interference in the country's internal affairs or attempts to impose guidelines that confined their support to humanitarian assistance alone.

95. **Ms. Díaz Corona** (Mexico), speaking as a youth delegate, said that the participation of youth and women was imperative to ensure the mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda. Inclusive economic growth was fundamental in that context, as were strengthened public policies to promote the transformative potential of all, including youth, women, migrants, indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations.

96. Mexico was committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As such, it had recently amended its Planning Act to include the three pillars of sustainable development and the principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination in national planning. A national council bringing together the three branches of national Government, local governments, the private sector, civil society and academia had been established to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A multidimensional approach to poverty should be taken, maintaining the integrated and indivisible nature of the Agenda. In that regard, the organization of the high-level political forum on sustainable development should be re-examined, since it currently focused on a subset of the Sustainable Development Goals at each session, rather than on the linkages among them.

97. During the current session, the Committee should focus on four key topics. The first was rapid technological change, since the promotion of technological innovation was key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Efforts within the United Nations should be coordinated in that regard. Second, all parties would benefit from a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. Third, climate change was of particular importance. States had a shared responsibility and a moral obligation to fulfil the Paris Agreement. During the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, guidelines applicable to all parties to the Agreement must be set forth and more ambitious nationally determined contributions must be established. Finally, the reform of the United Nations development system was necessary to adapt the institutional framework to the 2030 Agenda. Based on the Secretary-General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda, the Secretariat should now work to ensure that the system was operational in 2019.

98. The work of the Committee must be reinvigorated. To achieve that, divisions between developed and developing countries must be overcome. Resolutions on some items should be considered only every two or three years, since the discussion of certain topics and the adoption of certain draft resolutions had become anachronistic and did not focus on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Even worse, in some cases the Committee was duplicating the work of the Economic and Social Council, its subsidiary bodies and the high-level political forum for sustainable development. Only by working effectively together would it be possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Eleven years remained and the clock was ticking.

99. **Mr. Skoknic Tapia** (Chile) said that it remained urgent for the United Nations development system to adopt multidimensional mechanisms to measure poverty and development. Per capita income should not be the only criterion used to measure the development status of a country. His delegation welcomed steps taken by some institutions to recognize the multidimensional nature of development. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had begun discussing the

concept of "development in transition" to describe countries transitioning from one income level to another and facing both great opportunities and great challenges. Chile welcomed the establishment by the European Union of the Facility for Development in Transition, to be implemented beginning in 2019, as an acknowledgement of the dilemma facing that new group of countries.

100. Chile reaffirmed the principles of international trade and the legitimacy and competency of the United Nations to address that issue. His delegation welcomed the offer by Argentina to host the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in Buenos Aires in March 2019. The Conference would be an opportunity to acknowledge the increasing importance of South-South and triangular cooperation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

101. Migration contributed to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination when managed in a safe and orderly manner with respect for the human rights of migrants and in compliance with international law. Chile was grateful to the co-facilitators of negotiations on the Global Compact for Migration, which had resulted in the consensus document to be adopted in Morocco in December 2018.

102. The twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would be an important milestone in the full implementation of the Paris Agreement. The commitments under that Agreement were non-negotiable and could be effectively addressed through the transformation of production and consumption models, with increased use of renewable energies. Plastic represented a grave threat to the world's oceans, and Governments must act quickly to protect them. Chile had therefore banned the commercial use of single-use plastic bags.

103. Chile reiterated its concern regarding agricultural productivity, sustainable water use, food safety and urban-rural connections. Poverty and substandard living conditions in urban areas must be addressed with firm resolve.

104. His delegation reiterated its commitment to implementing the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations development system and looked forward to continued discussion on how to achieve comprehensive reform of the global, regional and local dimensions of operational activities for development, which should be tailored to distinct development realities and needs.

105. Partnerships for development between the public and private sector, academia and civil society must be diversified and enhanced, since the involvement of all relevant stakeholders was a requirement for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Chile reaffirmed the undeniable legitimacy of the United Nations and recognized the key work of the General Assembly and the Second Committee, in particular, in addressing macroeconomic, social and environmental matters within the framework of multilateralism. He called for flexibility and solidarity to achieve the best results during the current session, and for consensus to remain the principal mechanism for the adoption of resolutions.

106. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that climate change, assaults on multilateralism, increasing protectionism, persistent inequality, a disorderly tightening of financial conditions and escalating geopolitical tensions could disrupt development and hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Those challenges should be collectively addressed within a multilateral framework to speed progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Appropriate emphasis should be placed on an enabling global environment and global partnerships for development as well as on domestic resource mobilization.

107. The United Republic of Tanzania had strengthened its tax management system, as a result of which it had doubled its revenue collection. His Government had also declared that primary and secondary education should be universal and free, and continued to strengthen its health system and facilities to treat both communicable and non-communicable diseases. A health insurance system had been established.

108. His Government was making infrastructure investments focused on energy, a high-speed railway system to neighbouring countries and all-season roads. It was promoting investment in manufacturing, agriculture and other productive sectors to stimulate economic growth. A country-wide fibre-optic network and data centre had been operationalized.

109. Despite ongoing efforts to mobilize domestic resources, developing countries were experiencing ongoing tax regime issues and illicit financial flows that contributed to capital flight and denied developing countries their rightful income. The international community should redouble its efforts to combat those systemic issues by addressing tax competition and avoidance through the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. The overall purpose of that Committee should be to prevent international tax evasion by ensuring that Governments made a commitment to refrain from eroding each other's

tax bases and to create a transparent, coherent international tax system that supported equality and development. That would provide more resources to developing countries for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They needed help to fight global and multinational corruption, benefit from their natural resources and carve out a fair space in the global financial and trade architecture.

110. Developing countries could not eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development without predictable, timely and sustainable support. In that connection, the third Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development held in April 2018, at which member States had called for the implementation of inter-governmentally agreed conclusions, had been crucial. It was important to assess progress, identify challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes, address new and emerging topics of relevance for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and provide policy recommendations on developed countries' support for developing countries.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.